8: Barlow E-4 (no date)1949 NU7 Aztec NU7

I. INTRODUCTION

Nature of the Present Study

The present paper is the first part of a study of the empire that Cortés invaded when he set foot at Vera Cruz in 1519. This is the empire wrongly called "Aztec"—a term which the writer has considered elsewhere[1] and for which he proposes to substitute the name "Culhua Mexica." This and a second paper, to be published later, deal with the geographical extent of the Empire of the Culhua Mexica and with its division into tributary provinces. All towns that can be proved to have been subject to the Valley of Mexico in 1519 will be dealt with in the two parts of this study of Culhua Mexica. Later and more detailed portions of the larger study consider this vast Empire chronologically: how and when it came to reach its final dimensions, who dominated it at the outset and who toward the end, and so forth. The present mapping of the Empire of the Culhua Mexica is a necessary preliminary to the historical studies (in the form of local histories) which are to follow, and which are the writer's chief aim.

Great exactness is possible in mapping the Empire (see map at end of book), because of one monumental document, the *Matricula de Tributos;* its bibliography is considered in the second section of this Introduction. It is the original native tribute list, in which the payment exacted from the provinces was recorded; it is the official bookkeeping ledger of the Empire, a hardheaded, realistic document. The *Matricula* is shaped like a book, in which hieroglyphs for various towns—ranging in number from two to nearly thirty—of a province are

[1] R. H. Barlow, "Some Remarks on the term 'Aztec Empire,'" *The Americas* (1945), 1: 344–349.

This empire was the product of a Triple Alliance among three tribes settled in the Valley of Mexico. These three tribes differed in religion, in customs, and doubtless in many other things. Their names were the Tepaneca, the Acolhuaque, and the Mexica. (The Mexica were subdivided into Tenochca and Tlatelolca.) The chief towns of each during the period of the Empire—roughly speaking, the century before the Spaniards came—were Tlacopan [Tacuba], Texcoco, and Mexico-Tenochtitlan (with Mexico-Tlatelolco active from 1428 to 1473). In 1519, the end of the native period, the Mexica of Tenochtitlan had quite overshadowed their allies, so that it is proper to call the Empire of the final period—which is the period of the present study—the Empire of the Mexica or Mexicans. But more exactly, it should be called the Empire of the Culhua Mexica, for reasons I have set forth in the above-cited paper. It is hopelessly erroneous to call it the Aztec Empire, for although the name Aztec was once applied to the Culhua Mexica, at the start of their history, they had discarded it long before founding their capital city.

/p. 7/ INTRODUCTION

/p. 9/ Chapter 1

THEORIES CONCERNING THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE TENOCHCAS

●/2/ This work considers some aspects of the social organization of the Tenochcas, inhabitants of what was the island of Mexico Tenochtitlan (1), as it existed about the time of the arrival of the Spanish around

1. The term used to designate the inhabitants of this place at that time has traditionally been Aztecs. Actually it is an inadequate term because it includes other groups in other places. The term, that for this reason will be used to designate them, will be Tenochcas, which can be translated as "inhabitants of Tenochtitlan."

the year 1519.

By 1877 it could be said that in relation to its importance, no subject had been written so much about as that of the Mexican aborigines and the Spanish Conquest (2). Now, seventy years later, this is

2. Morgan, L. H., 1877, p. 204.

even more the case, and there is an enormous number of works, of every kind and length, about the inhabitants of Mexico, especially those living in the central part of the Valley of Mexico. A contributing factor in creating this situation is the attraction which is exercised on the investigator, in part by the cultural richness of ancient Mexico, in part by the dissatisfaction with the way in which past authors, in accord with the ideas of their day, dealt with, presented or interpreted the unrelated and meager data at our disposal about this area in the period with which we are dealing.

The study which is here presented tries to justify itself for the same reasons. Its subject, the calpulli in the social organization of the Tenochcas, had been originally much more ambitious (3),

3. Kinship and Property as a Basis of the Social Organization of the Tenochcas.

● /2/ attempting to elucidate all the characteristics of their social organization, and had to be reduced for various reasons. It was suggested to the author by the courses "Archeology of Mexico and Central America" given by Professor Alfonso Caso, "Analysis of the Sources for Mexican History" given by Professor W. Jiménez Moreno, and "Social and Economic Organization" given by Dr. Paul Kirchhoff, in which it was noted that /p. 10/ many fundamental aspects of the social organization of the inhabitants of Mexico which obtained at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, were unknown, particularly the basis for their organization; and that there was historical material and theoretical possibilities for making a reinterpretation, even with the scant data available in this respect.

Of course the basis of the social organization of the Tenochcas is not the only unknown aspect of a community as complex as was that of Mexico Tenochtitlan. There are a great many unknown aspects, which are very different in nature, but which do not have the same relative importance for all investigators: some are fundamental for those scholars who are interested in making universal generalizations (4) such as, for example, the manner in which those laws which are

4. Tax, Sol., 1937, p. 3.

valid for all societies, obtained in the Tenochca community. In the social organization of the Tenochcas one can also look for the pattern of happenings, dates, and persons, that is, the unique and outstanding occurrences in the Tenochca historic community. And one can have an interest in finding historic laws, that is, the principles which governed the development of the social events in the Tenochca community in the evolutionary phase through which it was passing just prior to the arrival of the Spanish.

With respect to the first group of problems, the aspects common to all societies, the author holds to the position that it is not of great scientific interest to show that the same happened in the Tenochca community as has happened in all human societies. The second group of subjects—the more particular—do not make up the content of this study either, because they are already being investigated by other people and it appears to him urgent that the singular social events of our community be examined scientifically, which entails their consideration as a result of the social forces which were active in the period in which they appeared. In the third group of subjects are

●121 included the problems which this study addresses: it begins with the principles which governed the social life of the Tenochca community in its historical context without discussing if this was the result of divergent, convergent or internal evolution, or of degeneration, or of acculturation, etc.

The problems treated here can be traced in the following terms:

a) To elucidate if there were clans among the inhabitants of Mexico Tenochtitlan just before the arrival of the Spanish, and if in the affirmative, what type they were.

b) To elucidate if at this time there existed any deep social stratification among them and what were its characteristics. /p. 11/

c) To elucidate if, about the time of the arrival of the Spanish, their social relations were molded by one or other of these previously mentioned factors, or by neither of them (5).

> 5. To elucidate the type of government—as a manifestation and proof of the existence of a determined type of society among the Tenochcas—is undoubtedly a problem which can be resolved on its own after knowing the basic social organization. It is not attempted in this study except in so far as it helps resolve the other problems.

114 Regarding these problems, the opinions of investigators—although they may not have outlined them exactly in the same terms—have been divided into two camps which make completely different affirmations and neither of which by itself explains the characteristics which we know the Tenochcas had. Some authors—among whom are those who actually initiated the discussion of this subject—like Bandelier (6) and Lehman (7), considered essentially that, in the

> 6. Bandelier, 1878, 1, 11.
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> 7. Lehman, W., 1909, p. 107, 108.

period to which we refer, the Tenochcas "still" had a gentile organization, putting a great stress on the existence of the calpullis which they considered equalitarian exogamous clans. Other authors such as Moreno (8), Caso, (9), Kroeber (10), White (11), Toscano (12), etc.,

114 strata of a community whose social role is determined by /p. 18/ the possession of basically different, but complementary means of production, such as land, tools or simply personal working capacity (42),

42. Marx, K., 1909, p. 1034.

and in which there is great interclass mobility (43). There are other

43. Mombert, P., 1944.

121 societies which evince castes. As we lack a definition of caste in terms of kinship and economy (since they are at times considered like clans but tentatively endogamous (44), it is proposed here, also

44. Forde, D., 1934, p. 273; Kroeber, A.L., 1944.

tentatively, to put forward such a definition; a caste being (1) a subdivision of a society, (2) with a strong endogamous tendency (3) to which one belongs by birth, (4) which automatically determines the rank of all the members of the society, and (5) which determines every individual's role in the social division of labor (45).

45. This is a definition tentatively arrived at through conversations with Dr. P. Kirchhoff.

In this work it has been the author's intention only to elucidate whether the social organization of the Tenochcas was rooted in phenomena of kinship through common descent, in light of earlier theoretical attainments, in order to attempt to explain its function and its place within the undeniable social evolution of humanity. Outside of this work has remained the discussion of social relations rising directly from economic production, as are commerce (46), slavery (47), and

46. In this respect there is a most interesting work of Acosta Saignes, The Pochtecas [Los Pochteca], (1945), and his thesis on the same subject.

47. See the work of Bosch, Carbs: Prehispanic Slavery among the Aztecs [La Esclavitud Prehispánica entre los Aztecas] (1945).

121 the organization of the empire, based fundamentally on the tribute of groups not related to the dominators. These are very extensive parts of the social organization of the Tenochcas, and very important; but they can be left aside in treating our problem because they can be considered surely as forms derived from a fundamental structure. Nor is the attempt made in this work to describe all the functioning of the Tenochca society, nor to discuss all the positions which have been adopted with respect to various particular aspects of their social organization: these are so many and so intricate that the discussion would constitute many works such as the present; only a few have been dealt with, those which appeared to me relevant to the discussion of the central theme. Thus this work is limited to elucidating if there were clans among the Tenochcas and what were the characteristics of the social classes. In Part I is an exposition of the data which have permitted certain investigators to think /p. 19/ that the Tenochcas had social classes. In Part II an attempt is made to demonstrate that in Tenochca society there existed an organism based on kinship through common descent, an ambilateral clan, by nature clearly stratified: the calpulli; and that the phenomena which might lead us to think that the society of the Tenochcas had classes are explained by the existence of groups of this type.

127 The sources consulted to obtain data which would serve as the basis for my conclusions are practically the same as those utilized by Bandelier and by Moreno, M., to which are added a few more items furnished later to investigators. The sources consulted naturally are very many more than the sources used and cited, for actually there is an enormous lack of data with respect to the problems which I treat in this work. Data from other regions had to be utilized (Tlaxcalla, Texcoco, for example) in order to complement certain information, and it was necessary to utilize data from very much later periods than the one whose reconstruction is attempted in this work; but this was impossible to avoid. In order to standardize the criterion regarding the validity of information, I regarded the documents immediately after the conquest of Mexico as describing the situation with some errors: (1) The limitations of inquiry and information, stemming from the fact that neither the chroniclers nor the informants had special training; (2) the stress given certain subjects by the way the informants or the recorders saw them, according to their interests; (3) the difficulty that the Spanish had in understanding a society so different from their own in some respects and so similar in others; (4) the difficulty the informants had in analyzing their own society. The

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HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

●121 It would be too much to pretend that the high cultures of Middle America depended on lakes for their development, but lakes are of extreme importance to domestic economy wherever they exist, and the role they have played in shaping culture has not been insignificant. The lakes of Mexico and Central America have not only played this role to a degree that is out of the ordinary, but they are part of a scene that has no parallel, either in importance or in drama, in the entire history of western culture. New lands and strange peoples had been discovered before 1519, and the astonishing fact of the existence of "primitive" societies was not at all new to western thinkers who had read Herodotus. What the 16th-century Spaniards found in Middle America, however, was something altogether new and totally unexpected: a new civilization, with all that the term implies. The Aztecs and the Mayas lived in cities, and performed great engineering feats; they had a developed art and literature, and a body of scientific knowledge at least as well founded as that of Egypt; their scholars were interested in history, and demonstrated in elaborate ceremonials a philosophy that was highly sophisticated (repellantly so to the Spaniards, of course) on the theological side.

The impact of these facts was quickly muffled by Spain's closed-door policy for the Indies, and dwindled almost to nothing in the exciting centuries that followed the Spanish Conquest. It is only in our own day that the full meaning of the Middle American civilization is becoming apparent, and historians, aware of the powerful tool that the comparative method provides, have seen the necessity of comparing *independent* civilizations and the cultural lineages that produced them. Such a comparison is the best way, perhaps the only way, to deduce laws of societal evolution, and Middle America provides the only phyletic series of cultures outside the Old World that was independent enough, and progressed far enough, to be useful.

121 127 An investigation of the history of Mexican limnology (and the

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limnology of Mexican history) has a small but not negligible part to play in the writing of the general history that is needed. In what follows we present some notes on the subject, but it has to be said at once that the state of scientific knowledge among the aboriginal Middle Americans can probably never be satisfactorily appraised. The reason is, of course, that most of the written sources have disappeared. Only a handful of genuine pre-Conquest manuscripts have been preserved, while many are known to have been wantonly destroyed as heretical. Copies of some of them, probably fairly accurate copies in some cases, were made shortly after the Conquest. Numerous histories were written by learned and intelligent friars, using these documents and other sources of information that have since disappeared in their turn. For some purposes, as for reconstructing tribal movements and genealogies, particularly those within a couple of centuries of 1519, it matters little that the records are copies, as Radin (1920) has shown. The events they show are real enough, and their historicity has in general been confirmed by archaeology. For events that were more remote in time and space from the memories of the educated natives who set them down, the validity of the records is highly problematical, and the documentary history of Toltec times is "una inextricable maraña", as Mendizábal (1947) called it.

Ideas are much easier to garble than events, and the reconstruction of Middle American science involves a distressing amount of that sterilizing activity, the history of historiography. That is, confronted by the fact that the native ideas have filtered through the minds of Europeans, we must investigate the quality of those minds before we can get on with the subject. This difficulty is particularly apparent to the historian of limnology, in that the earlier writers were singularly uninterested in lakes and ill-informed about them. No doubt this is because they came from Spain, the one country in Europe that is least likely to have produced a limnologically minded historian. Whatever the reason, the data reported below are as fragmentary as they are fascinating. At most one can hope to have it said, as Prescott (n. d.) said of Veytía, "Every page bears testimony to the extent and fidelity of his researches; and, if we feel but moderate confidence in the results, the fault is not imputable to him, so much as to the dark and doubtful nature of the subject."

AZTEC LIMNOLOGY

For knowledge of limnology among the Aztecs, as for all matters concerning Aztec customs and beliefs, one turns first to the great *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, by the Franciscan friar

13: Phillips U-4 (no date) 1925
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THE METAL INDUSTRY OF THE AZTECS

By GEORGE BRINTON PHILLIPS

I

THE collections of many thousand copper objects, tools, weapons, and ornaments from ancient Indian burial mounds and village sites in the Unites States of North America is strong evidence in favor of a pre-Columbian copper industry with which the aborigines were familiar before they reached the Iron Age. Did this knowledge and use of copper extend into Mexico and adjacent country of Central America?

Prescott in his *Conquest of Mexico* gives a picturesque account of the splendors of the court of the Montezumas with its silver and gold ornaments and utensils, but the knowledge of metals does not seem to have extended to the general use of copper or bronze for tools and weapons. The Aztec in the production of ornaments in the precious metal showed great skill and artistic workmanship and specimens sent over to Spain were greatly admired by the Spanish goldsmiths. Owing to scarcity of copper in their immediate vicinity, the ancient Mexicans confined its use to adze blades, chisels and some copper objects, possibly ceremonial implements. The tools were hardened by hammering and used in wood carving. The stone cutting it is believed was still done with flint tools.

Copper was obtained from the mines of Zocotallan where it occurred in masses on the surface and also from the galleries opened in the rock. Ancient workings have been discovered at Cerro del Aguilar in Guerrero, and the Zapotec country was well known for its copper mines. Deposits of tin were also found in Guerrero at the mines of Tasco, and it is said that Cortez obtained enough tin from that source with the copper to cast several large cannon, which he used in his fortress at the siege of Mexico. This use of tin in making a suitable alloy it is believed was due to the familiarity the Spaniards had of bronze, rather than to Aztec knowledge of the art.

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ON THE

ART OF WAR AND MODE OF WARFARE

OF THE

ANCIENT MEXICANS.

By AD. F. BANDELIER.

114 Not only the history of Ancient Mexico, but the true condition and degree of culture of its aboriginal inhabitants, are yet but imperfectly known. Nearly all architectural remains have disappeared; the descendants of the former aborigines have modified their plan of life, and we are almost exclusively reduced, for our knowledge of Mexican antiquities, to the printed and written testimony of those who saw Indian society at Mexico either at the time of, or not too long after, its downfall. But these authors, whether eye-witnesses of the conquest, like Cortés, Bernal Diez del Castillo, Andres de Tapia, and others; or missionaries sent to New Spain at an early date,—as Toribio of Benavent (Motolinia), Sahagun or (towards the close of the 16th, or beginning of the 17th century) Acosta, Davila, Mendieta, and Torquemada,—they are sometimes, on many questions, in direct opposition to each other. Thus the uncertainty is still increased, and the most difficult critical labor heaped upon the student. Furthermore, to magnify the task, we are placed in presence of several Indian writers of the 16th and 17th centuries (like Duran, Tezozomoc, and Ixtlilxochitl), who disagree with each other on the most important questions, quite as much as the Spanish authors themselves.

114 It may appear presumptuous, while knowing of the existence of
● 121 such difficulties, to attempt the description of even a single feature of life of Mexico's former Indian Society. Still, while engaged upon translating the Mexican chronicle of Fernando de Alvarado Tezozomoc into the English language, I was so struck by the picture which, unintentionally perhaps, that author exhibits of the condition and organization of the Mexican tribe, that I could not refrain from investigating more closely several features

14:Bandelier E-4 (no date) 1880 NU7 Aztec NU7

114 of that organization. The condition of Mexican society, which
121 is commonly given as subject to a monarchical, nay, even to a despotic rule, appears from the relation of Tezozomoc as one of a military, or rather warlike community. Every feature of their military action is intimately connected with their *civil life*. I could not resist the temptation, therefore, to make the military institutions of the Mexicans, their mode of warfare, the subject of special investigation, trusting that the results of this investigation, however defective, would not be utterly useless in promoting our knowledge of the true condition of ancient aboriginal society on this continent.

105 The Mexicans proper,[1] better known as the "Aztecs" of Mexico, belonged to the highest order of sedentary or "Village" Indians. Still, *warfare*, and *not agriculture*, appears to have been their chief occupation. They were essentially a tribe of *warriors*, who, as long as they were weak and hemmed in by foes, subsisted on fish, birds, and aquatic plants,[2] while, as soon as successful sallies from the lake-centre began to extend their sway and power, the Mexicans commenced also to live, in a great measure, upon the produce and industrial resources of *subjected* tribes. During their migration, from a region lying north of the present state of Durango, in Mexico,[3] to the centre of the high table land of that republic, they had subsisted upon the scanty crops which they

[101] [1] We adhere to the appellation "Mexicans" out of deference to a custom established. —*Mexica*, or *Mexitla* would be more correct. The former is used by a distinguished scholar, Señor Alfredo Chavero, of the city of Mexico. (See his "Calendario Azteca.") The etymology of the names "Azteca," "Aztlantlaca," and others, is foreign to the purpose of this essay.

[2] See Juan de Torquemada ("Los Veinte y un Libros Rituales y Monarchia Indiana "con el Origen y Guerra de los, Indios occidentales," Madrid, 1723. Barcia's reprint of the original, which appeared in 1613), Lib. II, cap. XI, pp. 92 and 93, of 1st volume. (He adds that the art of fishing was unknown to the agricultural tribes of the Valley previous to the coming of the Mexicans.) Also, Fray Diego Duran (Historia de las Indias de Nueva España y Islas de Tierra firme, written about 1579-81, and published by Sr. José F. Ramirez, Mexico, 1867), vol. I, chap. IV and V.

[173] [3] Fernando de Alvarado Tezozomoc (Crónica Mexicana,—published in vol. IX. of Kingsborough's Antiquities of Mexico), chap. I, p. 5, "mas de las tierras y montes que "hoy habitan los Chichimecas, que es por Santa Barbara." Duran, in speaking of the "seven caves" (Chicomóztoc), from which the Nahuatl tribes (Mexicans included) all pretended to issue, says: "These caves are in Teoculuacan, otherwise called Aztlan, a "country which we all know to be towards the north, and connected with Florida." (Chap. I, p. 8.) "They went over and through all the country of the Chichimecas, over "the new lands and plains of Cibola." (Chap. II, p. 21.) Cibola, as it has been suggested, was the name given to Zuñi, a pueblo still extant in New Mexico. (See "His- "torie of the Great and Mightie Kingdom of China, and the situation thereof, etc., etc.," translated from the Spanish of the Padre Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza (1586), by R. Parke, and republished by the Hacklurt Society, in its volume of 1853. (2 volumes.) Zuñi: "the Spaniards do call it Cibola."

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ON THE DISTRIBUTION AND TENURE OF LANDS, AND THE CUSTOMS WITH RESPECT TO INHERITANCE, AMONG THE ANCIENT MEXICANS.

BY AD. F. BANDELIER.

000 IN a previous paper we have endeavored to describe the warlike customs and organization of the Mexican tribe.[1] Our conclusions in regard to them are somewhat at variance with those generally adopted, since, instead of the military despotism which heretofore has been admitted as existing in ancient Mexico, we found but the military democracy peculiar to a warlike tribe.[2] It is our purpose 121 now to investigate how far the Mexicans may have progressed in their notions about the tenure and distribution of the soil.

114 The picture which nearly all the authors, ancient as well as modern, trace of the condition of aboriginal Mexico is that of a feudal monarchy.[3] This alone should fix permanently the mode of landed tenure. It implies also the notion of abstract ownership, and thus indicates a high state of culture. But we have already

[1] "On the Art of War and Mode of Warfare of the Ancient Mexicans," in 10th Annual Report of the Peabody Museum of American Archæology and Ethnology. A

[2] "Art of War, etc., etc., of the Ancient Mexicans," pp. 113, 114, 115, to 137 inclusive, especially the notes. See also "Ancient Society," by Lewis H. Morgan. (N. York, 1877.) Part II, chapter VII, "The Aztec Confederacy," pp. 186–214 inclusive.

[3] The first information tending to represent the condition of Mexico as a feudal state was probably furnished by Cortés; or through his expedition at least. The reports of the preceding voyage of Grijalva (1518) contain no positive statements. On the other hand the certificate issued by Cortés (probably about the 20 May, 1519, or 29 days after his landing at Ulua), to the chiefs of Axapusco and Tepeyahualco, already [643] speaks of "the great Montezuma, which *resides* in this great city of Tenochtitlán and all its provinces." We have not Cortés' first letter to the emperor, but in his second report, 30 Oct., 1520, he mentions "a great Lord called Mutezuma." (Vedia, "Historiadores primitivos de Indias," Vol. I. Carta Segunda, pp. 12 and 13.) The same dispatch contains a number of details on Montezuma's power, from which a feudal empire was necessarily construed as for inst. (p. 33): "There are in this great city many very large and fine houses, the cause of it being that all the *Lords of the land, vassals of the said Mo*[644] *tezuma*, have their houses in that city . . . ." "What has been ascertained is: that his sovereignty was almost as large as Spain . . ." (p. 34.) Gomara, who published his "Conquista de Méjico" in 1552, already mentions "thirty lords of one-hundred-thousand vassals each, and three-thousand lords of places." (Vedia I, p. 343. "Cortes y guarda de Moteczuma.") Oviedo ("Historia general y natural de Indias," Vol. III, Lib.

 9 A [See H. Bandelier, this file.--Analyst]

[p. 385]

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seen that the institutions of the Mexicans were democratic and not monarchical, that their chiefs and leaders filled elective, and in no case hereditary positions.[4] This latter fact whose final discussion we reserve for another occasion, speaks strongly against the existence of privileged classes, based upon territory and landed property; therefore it also militates against feudality itself.

Still we cannot permit ourselves to become prejudiced by such indications, against the views generally accepted. They merely warn us of the *difficulties of our task*. These difficulties are greater yet than those against which we contended in our first essay. The military life of the Mexicans has furnished the bulk of their history, and through it a number of facts, by which the former could be almost restored. The question of distribution of the soil, however, apparently relates to *customs* only; broken up and to a great extent obliterated centuries ago. Nevertheless, accessory facts, and especially a merely cursory review of the history of the Mexican tribe, may enable us yet to form an idea of these customs. The Mexican rules of inheritance are in direct connection with them also, and lastly, the *acts of the Spaniards* during the first times after the conquest, when they more or less suddenly overturned the ancient order of things, should bring to light many forgotten features of aboriginal tenure and distribution of the soil.

Having thus sketched the programme — so to say — of our work, we have yet to offer two explanations ere we proceed to enter upon the discussion proper, itself.

In the first place: by "accessory facts," we refer to the *social organization* of the Mexicans in particular. It is inseparable from

XXXIII, cap. XLVI, p. 503) again speaks of "more than three-thousand lords his subjects, each one of many vassals, and each held his principal dwelling in Temistitan, residing there certain months each year." The author, a friend of Columbus, and personally acquainted with all the eminent men of the conquest, resided at the West Indies and Nicaragua until 1556 (his stay though interrupted by at least six voyages to Spain and back), was one of the most cautious and best situated of the old chroniclers. But the chief originator of the feudal view is Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl, a half breed of Texcuco, and belonging to the kin of that tribe's chieftains. He wrote about the year 1600, and both of his works, the "Relaciones historicas," and the "Historia de los Chichimecos ó reyes antiguos de Texcuco," present, it should not be denied, a picture of logical development of feudal institutions on Mexican soil. Torquemada of course concurs. We hope to be able to investigate, elsewhere, the claims of Ixtlilxochitl to the rank of a reliable source. Fairness, however, compels us here to mention the above authors, as the mainstays of current opinion.

[4] "Art of War," etc., pp. 96, 128 and 161.

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landed tenure, and we therefore must recur to it frequently in the course of our allusions to the history of the tribe. 121

Secondly: we do not pretend to review the history of ancient Mexico as fully as it *should* be done, but only as far as it touches the subject of this paper. Many points therefore, which ought to be closely scrutinized, will be passed over lightly, or without any discussion. 128

One of the most learned authors of the 16th century, on American topics,—the Jesuit father Joseph de Acosta, says: "Learned men affirm and write that the relations and the memories of these Indians do not go further back than four-hundred years. . . . . "[5] 114

Indeed, although much has been written about the aboriginal history of Mexico, it appears as if the 12th century was the *limit* of *definite tradition*.[6] What lies beyond it is vague and uncertain, remnants of traditions being intermingled with legends and mythological fancies. Nothing positive can be gathered except that, even during the earliest times, Mexico was settled or overrun by sedentary, as well as by nomadic tribes,—that both acknowledged 173 174

[5] "Historia natural y moral de las Indias," Lib. I, cap. XXV, p. 83. The passage relates directly to Peru, but is just as applicable to Mexico.

[6] "We venture to assume this period as the one during which traditional history of Mexico really begins. Of course, those writers who have made the fabrication of a Mexican chronology a special object, go much further back. The late Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, for instance, quotes the "Codex Chimalpopoca," purported to bear date 22 May, 1536, and which begins as follows (History of the three suns). "This is the beginning of the histories of all kinds which happened a long time ago, how the earth was divided, and distributed to each one, its origin and foundation, how the sun began to give to each one his share, assigning the limits; there are now six times four-hundred years, and one-hundred more, and thirteen more . . . ." The distinguished historian concludes therefrom, that 985 B. C. there occurred already, in Middle America, a division of lands according to a systematic register ("Popol-Vuh." Introduction, page CXi). Clavigero's Chronology begins 596 A. D. ("Storia del Messico," Lib. II, cap. I). Don Mariano Veytia ("Historia Antigua de Méjico," published by Sr. Ortega, 1836), after fixing the date of the establishment of "Huehuetlapallan," to the year 2237 of the earth's creation (Vol. I, cap. II, p. 23), or 1796 B. C. (p. 219) begins for the settlement of the Toltecs at Tolantzinco in 667 A. D. (Cap. XXII, p. 121, of 1st volume). Ixtlilxochitl ("Histoire des Chichimèques ou des anciens rois de Texcuco," translation by Mr. Ternaux Compans) says: (Cap. II p. 15) that the Toltecs founded Tollan 508 A. D. No reliance can be placed on these statements and dates. They are not any longer traditional, but mythical, and although we are far from disregarding the importance of legends or myths for historical investigations, we still cannot accept them as chronological bases. The oldest date in the history of Mexico which appears to be approximately certain is that of the settlement of the Mexicans in the marsh where they subsequently built the pueblo of Tenochtitlan. It would about agree with A. D. 1325. Allowing two centuries more for the period during which the Mexicans and their kindred tribes reached the valley, we are carried to the twelfth century as the time from which distinct tradition has yet reached us. What lies beyond can occasionally be rendered of value for ethnological purposes, but it admits of no definite historical use. 114

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ON THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND MODE OF GOVERNMENT OF THE ANCIENT MEXICANS.

BY AD. F. BANDELIER.

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121 Two previous papers have already been devoted to some of the most prominent features of the life of the ancient Mexicans, namely: warlike customs, and their mode of distributing and occupying the soil and their rules of Inheritance.[1] The conclusions of both essays were chiefly negative, in so far as they tended to establish the non-existence of a condition which has, for three centuries, been regarded as prevailing. Thus, in the first, we have attempted to disprove the existence of a military despotism[2], and in the second, the existence of feudalism[3] among the natives of Mexico. More positive results were, however, foreshadowed in both instances by the suggestion, if not by the demonstration, that aboriginal society in Mexico rested on a democratic principle. The present essay is intended to show—if the organization of the natives of Mexico was *not* as it is commonly represented—what that organization really was, according to our conception, and what status

[1] *Tenth Report of the Peabody Museum:* "*On the Art of War and Mode of Warfare of the Ancient Mexicans.*" *Eleventh Report:* "*On the Tenure and Distribution of Lands among the Ancient Mexicans, and the Customs with Respect to Inheritance.*"

[2] "*Art of War,*" pp. (127, 128, and 161).

[3] "*Tenure of Lands,*" (pp. 418 and 448). In both instances, as well as in the present discussion, the works of the Hon. L. H. Morgan have furnished to the writer his points of departure and lines of investigation; besides, the distinguished American ethnologist has watched with more than friendly solicitude the progress of all these essays. If I seize the opportunity to recall here the debt of gratitude under which I stand toward him, it is coupled with the wish to express heartfelt thanks to several of my friends, to whose liberal assistance these and the preceding pages owe their existence, nearly as much as to my individual work. Let me name here, Mr. F. W. Putnam, Curator of the Peabody Museum, Col. Fred Hecker, of Summerfield, Illinois, Dr. G. Bruhl, of Cincinnati, Ohio, and the officers of the Mercantile Library at St. Louis, Missouri. Lastly, because most remote, though certainly not least, am I deeply indebted to the great documentary historian of the City of Mexico, Sr. Don Joaquin Garcia Icazbalceta for nearly all information which could not be obtained from the usually known sources.

[See 14:Bandelier and 15:Bandelier, this file.--Analyst (857)]

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of progress in Institutions can be assigned to the remarkable tribe which has become so prominent in history. In other words, our object is to reconstruct the mode of government of the ancient Mexicans, the nature of its offices and dignities, and especially the principles ruling and guiding their social agglomeration.

The distinguished Mexican scholar, Manuel Orozco y Berra, explains, as well as qualifies, the condition of the aborigines of Mexico in the following manner:

"If, from the boundary-lines of the empire [of Mexico, according to his views] we now turn to the races peopling its area, we find it to be a truth undeniable that no common nor mutual tie connected these numerous and diverse tribes. Each one was independent under its chiefs.[4]"

[4] "*Geografía de las Lenguas y Carta Etnográfica de México*," por *Manuel Orozco y Berra*, Mexico, 1864, (Tercera Parte, IX México, p. 252). "Si de las demarcaciones del imperio pasamos á considerar las razas que lo poblaban, encontraremos como una verdad innegable que tanta tribu diversa no tenia un lazo comun de union. Cada una era independiente bajo el mando de sus señores. Las ambiciones particulares encendian la guerra, y la misma familia se fraccionaba. A su semejanza, cada pueblo tenia un gefe que de nombre reconocia al señor principal, y todas las provincias estaban subdividas hasta formar un sistema bajo algunos puntos semejante al feudal. Rencores y odios apartaban las tribus, y la guerra era constante, porque siendo una de sus principales virtudes la valentia, no podian verse sin combatirse. A imitacion de los orgullosos animales que sirven de diversion en los palenques. Por instinto ó porque las generaciones son arrastradas aun á su pesar por la corriente de los tiempos, los Mexicanos emprendieron la tarea de reunir en un solo haz todos aquellos pueblos, de formar de ellos una nacion, y de asimilar sus intereses con los intereses del imperio. Para llevar á cabo semejante tarea era preciso, la fuerza para poder triunfar; un sistema proseguido con tino, y con tenacidad, y el tiempo bastante para que el odio se borrara y dejara nacer las simpatías. Pero la unidad que solicitaban los Mexicanos llevaba á las tribus al mas espantoso de los despotismos; el imperio era muy nuevo para haber alcanzado otra cosa que reducir á la servidumbre, sin poder contar con el amor de sus vasallos; de manera que en lugar de amigos, tenia enemigos solapados, y su grandeza era solo engañosa appariencia. En esta sazon se presentaron los conquistadores españoles. Cualquiera fuerza extraña habia de hacer vacilar al coloso; las tribus, mal halladas con la servidumbre, vieron en los invasores á quienes podrán salvarles del yugo; en su juicio rencoroso no supieron advertir, que por alcanzar una estéril venganza aventuraban su propia existencia, y corrieron de tropel á colocarse bajo las banderas de los estranjeros." It may be interesting to compare this weighty authority with my remarks on the same subject in "*Art of War*," (pp. 100, also note 17), and "*Tenure of Lands*," (pp. 416, 417, and 418, and annotations.) The difference consists in that Sr. Orozco y Berra ascribes to the ancient Mexicans a decided tendency to "nationalize," so to say, the aboriginal people of their conquered area, to force uniformity of customs and organization upon them, and establish a true despotism. To this I beg leave to suggest in reply:—

(1). That the Mexicans, *alone*, formed only a *part* (two-fifths in amount of tribute) of that power which is commonly termed "an Empire" (El Imperio) and which was but the Nahuatl confederacy of the Mexican valley. In evidence of it I will take the liberty to quote his own words, (same part and chapter, pp. 240, 241): "El reino de Acolhuacan era el segundo en poderio; su capital era Tetzcoco, á la orilla del lago de su nombre. Pequeña hoy y sin material interes, en lo antiguo fué rival de México y

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proper, who dwelt, as elsewhere established by us, on the partly artificial islands in the lagune of the Mexican valley.[7] Besides the prominence acquired by them in the annals of history, it may safely be assumed that, in a general manner, their Institutions are typical of those of other sedentary tribes.[8]

121 *Tribal* society, based according to Lewis H. Morgan upon KIN, and not *political* society which rests, according to the same author, upon TERRITORY and PROPERTY, must therefore be looked for among the ancient Mexicans. It remains for us to establish its degree of development, its details, and the manner of its working.

In order to comprehend the true nature of these questions, we should secure as much information as possible of the *past* of the tribe under consideration. Institutions are never wilfully or accidentally created, but evolved; in other words, they are the result of growth in knowledge and experience.[9] The great difference existing between tribal society and political is explained as a dif-

[63] [64] [48]

de México," Col. de Doc., Vol. II, Icazbalceta, p. 561, and especially p. 592), "México tenia en su tiempo en el hacer guerra esta órden; que yendo á la guerra, al que se daba de paz no tenia sobre él tributo cierto, sino que tantas veces en el año lo llevaban presente á su discrecion del que lo llevaba; pero si era poco mostrábales mal rostro, y si mucho agradeciaselo. Y en estos no ponia mayordomo ni recaudador ni cosa; el señor se era señor. Los que tomaba de guerra decian *tequitlis tlacoti*, que quiere decir, tributan como esclavos. En estos ponia mayordomos y recogedores y recaudadores; y aunque los Señores mandaban su gente, eran debajo de la mano destos de México . . . ." *Motolinia* (Trat. III, cap. VII, p. 186), *Granados y Galvez*. (5th night, p. 166), a singular picture of purest feudality, for which Gomara may be responsible in part. *Ramirez de Fuenleal* (*Letter of 4th Nov.*, 1532, 1st; "*Recueil*," (pp. 245, 246, and 247). *Zurita* "*Rapport*," (p. 16), to be compared with Mendieta and Torquemada.

Consequently there was no tendency towards unification or nationalization in all the successful and extensive raids which the Nahuatlaca of the valley of Mexico carried on for a full century. No organic body, larger than the tribe, resulted from these sanguinary forays; because the confederacy itself was not the end, but the beginning of these undertakings. This justifies the view which I shall hereafter advocate in regard to the nature of that confederacy namely: as a mere partnership to carry on the business of warfare the latter in turn being part of the mode of subsistence.

[8] " Based upon territory and property " according to L. H. Morgan, in contra-distinction to tribal-society, based upon "Kin." ("*Ancient Society*," chapter II, page 68).

[8] "*Art of War*," p. 25.

[7] "*Art of War*," p. 150. "*Tenure of Lands*," pp. 421, 422.

[8] "*Ixtlilxochitl* (*Histoire des Chichimèques*," Cap. XXXVI, p. 343). "Ainsi, tout ce qui se dit de Tezcuco doit s'entendre aussi des deux autres, ..." *Gomara* (p. 440, Vedia, I). "To speak of the Mexicans, signifies as much as speaking of all New Spain." The title of the section is: "Costumbres de los hombres," and the original text reads: "Hablando de méjicanos, es hablar en general de toda la Nueva-España." Although *Zurita* (p. 5) insists upon the variety of customs among the aborigines,—changing from settlement to settlement, from tribe to tribe,—his own report furnishes the proof of the contrary, and it is evident from the text that he alludes principally to the diversity in languages and dialects.

[9] *Morgan* ("*Ancient Society*," Chap. I, p. 6).

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ferent state of progress. But Institutions have grown out of the relations between the sexes, and the increase of the human species and its propagation. Had political society existed in Mexico, we should be entitled to find there a plain and definite conception of the family.[10] Whether such is the case a glance at the system of consanguinity of the ancient Mexicans, as far as it may be possible, will tell us. |21

Among American aborigines of low culture, in fact over the widest area once held by the "Indian" race, "mother-right" ruled supreme. The tangible fact, coarsely expressed, that a child was always sure of his *mother*, whereas it might not be equally certain of his *father*,[11] created in course of time and with increased numbers a tendency to aggregate into clusters whose basis was certainty of descent in common. These clusters were the KINS, significantly termed "lineages" by Spanish authors. Such as traced back their descent to a common mother therefore composed one of these, regardless of their male procreators. The family—consisting of a group which includes children as descendants of *both* parents—was not yet recognized, and the kin took its place for all purposes of public life. It formed the *unit of social organization*. With the growth of knowledge and experience however, and a corresponding increase of wants, the importance of man rose correspondingly. "Mother-right" began to yield; female descent to change to "descent in the male line." Nevertheless the kin remained the unit of social agglomeration, with the only difference that it was reckoned through males instead of by females. It required the final overthrow of the kin as a public Institution to bring about the present shape of that intimate group, the family, among the most highly advanced nations.[12]

The two extremes of growth of the family, as characterized by the inception of the kin, and by the family after the obliteration

[10] (*Ancient Society*," Chap. II. p. 78.) For the so-called "Descriptive System of Relationship," compare. *L. H. Morgan* ("*Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*," Chap. II, pp. 10, 12, 13).

[11] This assertion is found in various authors. I shall quote but one: *Gregorio Garcia*, ("*Origen de los Indios de el Nuevo Mundo e Indias Occidentales*," second edition, 1729, Madrid, Lib. IV, Cap. XXIII, p. 247).

[12] Although it is entirely out of the line of these researches to enter upon a discussion of Primitive Marriage, I was compelled to refer to the question of kin in such a manner as to explain at least the importance of that group in the history of society. For anything else, the works of Mr. Morgan, Sir Henry S. Maine, John F. Mc Lennan, and some publications of Dr. Ad. Bastian, should be consulted, besides a great number of others too numerous to mention here.

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121 of the former, are distinguished by the terminology of relationship. In the case of the former, relatives are at once classified; in the latter instance, they are merely described. Now, our investiga-
611 tions of the customs of Inheritance among the ancient Mexicans have led us to the conclusion that they had already achieved progress to *descent in the male line*.[13] *Actual* family existed among them in its incipient form at least.

601 But we meet here with a singular feature in designating relationships. *Ascending* from the "Ego," as point of departure, we find the following terms in the Mexican (Nahuatl) language.

Father: "tatli"—"teta."[14]

Brother of father or mother (paternal or maternal uncle): "tlatli"—"tetla."[15]

Grandfather: "tecul." Granduncle: "tecol."[16]

Great-grandfather: "achtontli."[17]

[13] "*Tenure of Lands*" (p. 429, note 106).

[14] *Molina* ("*Vocabulario*," Part Ia, p. 91; IIa, pp. 106, 91). Besides the plural "tetatzin," the names, "yxcacauhti," "teixcacauh," are also mentioned (I, p. 91). The former is defined (II, p. 48) as "natural father." It derives from "Izcalia" or "ninoizcalia"—"to give life" and "acauhtli." The latter evidently is an abbreviation or corruption from "nitla teachcauhtia"—"to be preferred in what is distributed, or in a distribution" (II, p. 2), which in turn is at the root of "teachcauhtin"—"elder brother" (II, p. 91). It is superfluous here to quote authorities in support of the fact that "ach" is frequently corrupted to "ac," or the inverse. In Cakchiquel: "Tata" See *Brasseur de Bourbourg* ("*Grammaire de la Langue Quichée, etc.*" pp. 217, 218). The root "Ta" is also found in other Indian idioms, See: *Gatschet* (*Zwölf Sprachen aus dem Südwesten Nordamerikas*," p. 137).

[15] *Molina* (I, p. 100; II, p. 140.) All the difference consists in the insertion of the letter "l" after the "t." "Tetla" is but an abbreviation of 'Te-tatli," from "Tehuatl" thou, p. 94, and father, which is also shown in the alteration of "tatli" to "tayta" or "tata;" the name given by children to their father (p. 91, II). Corresponds to the qquiché "tat" (*Brasseur de Bourbourg*, "*Grammaire, etc.*" p. 218), and to the Muysca "Ze paba" ("Pába" father). *Morgan* after *Uricoechea* ("*Systems of consanguinity*," p. 285).

[16] *Molina* (II, p. 94; II, p. 93). Here again the change from "u" to "o" appears, which is so frequent among older authors. For inst., *Tescoco* and *Texcuco*, *Omotochtli* and *Ometochtli*, *Tlacopan* and *Tlacohuapan*, *Olli* and *Ulli*, etc. etc. Such changes are very excusable, they proceed from the Indian pronunciation of vowels. On this subject compare, although it concerns properly but the Qquichua idiom of Peru, the excellent essay of Señor Don *Garino Pacheco y Zegarra* of Puno, entitled "*Alphabet phonétique de la langue Qquichua*," published in the 2nd volume of the "*Compte Rendu du Congrès International des Américanistes*," at Nancy, in 1875. He says (p. 303) "D'autre part, le kehua différant essentiellement des langues romanes, surtout en ce qui concerne les sons élémentaires, il est impossible de donner une idée exacte de ces sons au moyen du seul alphabet latin. . . ." In regard to "O" and "U," see pp. 306, 307, 308. etc. What the author says of the Qquichua applies exactly to the Nahuatl also. See *Molina* ("Prologo y Avisos," 3d page "Aviso septimo").

[17] *Molina* (I, p. 117; II, p. 2). Literally, "little preferred one." Compare *Sahagun* (Lib. X, cap. I, p. 3, 3d Vol).

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a revolution before the advent of Europeans. We are consequently, by this investigation of the history of aboriginal Mexico, justified in claiming the state of its society to be as yet exclusively tribal.

Tribal society presupposes equality of rights among all members of the kins composing the tribe. Hence it follows that "caste" and hereditary rank could not exist, that there could not be any division, among the ancient Mexicans, into higher and lower classes, into "nobles" and "common people," or into hereditary professions or vocations like "priests," "warriors," "merchants," "artisans," and "tillers of the soil." In vindication however of our assertion, which might otherwise appear as too sweeping, we may be permitted here to dwell at some greater length on this particular question.

Nobility is based upon hereditary privilege of some kind. Either it consists in landed property with hereditability of title and (at least originally) office, or in a hereditary charge alone, or privilege or power over others transmitted with the blood. While the former has become more usually known and is therefore regarded as characteristic, the latter, always accompanied by "loose wealth" at least, is still found among pastoral nations.[62] It may even have been the incipient form of the other. Now, among the ancient Mexicans, we have seen that:—

1. The notion of abstract ownership of the soil, in any shape, had not yet arisen.

2. Individuals, whatever might be their position or office, without any exception, had but a right to use certain tracts, and no possessory rights, even, to land were attached to any office or dignity.

3. No office itself, whether of the kin or tribe, was hereditary in any family, since the Mexican family, as such, was yet in but a nascent state.[63]

4. Futhermore loose property was subject to such diminutions occasioned by the mode of worship,[64] and especially of burial,[65]

[62] The Arabs for instance. See *Kremer* ("*Geschichte der herrschenden Ideen des Islam*").

[63] For these three points see "*Tenure of Lands*" in general, and pp. 447–48 in particular.

[64] *Motolinia* (Trat. I, cap. IV, p. 31). "Otros trabajaban y adquirian dos ó tres años cuanto podian, para hacer una fiesta al demonio, y en ella no solo gastaban cuanto tenian, mas aun se adendaban, de manera que tenian que servir y trabajar otro año y aun otros dos para salir de deuda; . . ."

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565 of any connection by kin. This presupposes a *class of outcasts from the bond of kinship.*

There is no evidence of the formation of such a cluster prior to the permanent settlement of the tribe. Neither can we trace its gradual increase from a given time. But a glance at some of the rules of kinship, and at the practical working of these rules finally crystallizing into an equivalent for laws, will enable us to discern its origin.

●121 The relation of sexes being at the bottom of society based upon kin, it follows that sexual intercourse gradually assumed a regulated shape, proportionate to the progress in institutions. The ancient Mexicans had, as we have already established, advanced into descent in the male line, and had secured a nascent state of the modern family. Marriage was well known to them
[581] as a *rule*. But so powerful was the influence exercised by the kin, as unit of public life that, once the ritual union of a couple acknowledged as a necessity for future joint life, it exacted of its male members the obligation to marry for the purpose of propagating and increasing the kin. Only such as were naturally helpless, and such as in view of "medicine" made vows of permanent
[581] chastity, were excused. Any other youth therefore, who refused to take a wife at the proper age, was treated with contempt and consequently expelled from the kin.[80]

562 Woman, among the aboriginal Mexicans, was in a singular predicament. Through the establishment of descent in the male line she lost her hold on public life, (which she latterly regained through the establishment of the family proper) and thus remained little else than a *chattel* in the power of man. Still, the ritual act
562 of marriage being once adopted, the same obligation to marry,
589 which we have already found incumbent upon the male, also devolved upon the female, and any girl therefore, who did not "take vows" for "medicine," or who was physically not mis-

[80] *Clavigero* (Lib. VII, cap. V, p. 431). *Zurita* ("Rapport, etc.," pp 133 and 134) "s'ils ne voulaient pas prendre des femmes, on les congédiait." *Mendieta* (Lib. II, cap. XXIV, p. 138), "Llegados á la edad de casarse, ... Si pasando la edad se descuidaban, y veian que no se querian casar, tresquilábanlos, y despedianlos de la compañia de los mancebos." This meant exclusion from the kin since, as soon as they were married, "they were classified, since, according to their custom, they were divided into sections each of which had a chief or captain, as well for the collection of taxes as for other reasons." These "chiefs or captains" were those of the calpulli. *Zurita*, (p. 138), also *Bustamante*, ("Tezcoco," Part III, cap. III, p. 214), "Cuando se casaban los empadronaban. . . . ." *Torquemada* (Lib. IX, cap. XII, p. 186, almost a copy of Mendieta).